

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY OES/OFA/FA:BSHALLMAN:EEB
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EFIS, JA, ICCAT

SUBJECT: JAPANESE CATCH OF ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA

1. FOLLOWING IS EXCERPT FROM APRIL 24 TESTIMONY OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY JOHN D. NEGROPONTE BEFORE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES, ON THE SUBJECT OF ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA: BEGIN TEXT ...MR. FORSYTHE. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, JUST FROM 1974 TO 1977, THE GIANT BLUEFIN TUNA CATCH IN THE GULF OF MEXICO BY JAPANESE FISHERMEN HAS MULTIPLIED BY EIGHT TIMES, 300-ODD TONS TO THIS 2500 TONS. MR. BLONDIN. THAT IS CORRECT, YES, SIR. MR. FORSYTHE. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE IS A PRETTY GOOD CASE FOR TRYING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT MOVING IT, SO THAT IT DOES STAY SOMEWHERE NEAR TRADITIONAL LEVELS. BUT I GUESS THIS IS REALLY THE BEST JOB OF TRYING TO CONVINCE THE JAPANESE THAT SOMEHOW, FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, IT IS GOOD FOR US.

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MR. NEGROPONTE. IF I MAY, I DO NOT THINK WE WILL ACCOMPLISH IT IN THE CONTEXT OF ICCAT ALONE. I THINK THAT WHAT WE WILL HAVE TO DO WITH OUR JAPANESE FRIENDS IS TO RAISE THE ISSUE IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR OVER-ALL FISHERIES RELATIONSHIP. THEY BENEFIT A GREAT DEAL FROM BEING ABLE TO FISH OFF OUR COAST FOR A LOT OF OTHER THINGS, AND MAYBE IT IS A QUESTION OF CHOICES THAT THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE.

AND PERHAPS EXERCISING A LITTLE MORE RESTRAINT IN THIS FISHERY BECAUSE OF SOME OF THE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS THAT WE GIVE TO THEM. I THINK WE HAVE BEEN QUITE GENEROUS TO THE JAPANESE IN THE PAST FEW YEARS.

MR. FORSYTHE. A LITTLE TOO NICE?

MR. NEGROPONTE. I DID NOT SAY THAT.

(LAUGHTER.)

MR. FORSYTHE. WELL, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT IS A PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY AS HAS ALREADY BEEN INDICATED EARLIER WITH OUR EAST COAST FISHERMEN IN THIS REGARD, AND IT DOES HAVE, I KNOW, AN IMPACT ON RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN OFF THE EAST COAST; AND SO CERTAINLY I HOPE THAT YOU USE WHAT CARDS YOU CAN FIND AND USE THEM WELL.

MR. NEGROPONTE. THANK YOU.

MR. LEGGETT. OKAY. MR. HUGHES, ANY QUESTIONS?

MR. HUGHES. YES, MR. CHAIRMAN, JUST A LITTLE BIT.

I GATHER THAT THE INITIATIVES TO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN REJECTED IN TRYING TO NEGOTIATE SOME BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH REGARD TO BLUEFIN TUNA. WE HAVE BEEN REBUFFED SO FAR?

MR. NEGROPONTE. THUS FAR, MR. HUGHES, BUT I WOULD HASTEN TO ADD THAT THE INITIATIVES WE HAVE TAKEN WERE AFTER THIS ICCAT MEETING, IF I AM NOT MISTAKEN. THEY WERE MADE IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY. AND PERHAPS WE CAN MAKE THIS EFFORT AGAIN WHEN WE HAVE OUR BILATERAL -- WE CONSULT

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ANNUALLY BEFORE MAKING OUR ALLOCATIONS FOR ALL SPECIES OF FISH OFF OUR COASTS, AND PERHAPS WE CAN RAISE IT AGAIN WITH THE JAPANESE AT THAT TIME, WHICH WILL LIKELY BE IN JULY OR AUGUST. I THINK THAT WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE TIME TO RAISE THE QUESTION.

MR. HUGHES. AND HOW ABOUT IN SO FAR AS DISCUSSIONS WITH OUR JAPANESE FRIENDS, THE OVER-ALL GIFA, WHEN DOES THAT TAKE PLACE?

MR. NEGROPONTE. THAT IS WHAT I WAS REFERRING TO.

THE GIFA TYPE CONSULTATIONS WILL LIKELY TAKE PLACE IN JULY OR AUGUST, AND I WOULD THINK THAT THAT WOULD BE THE MOST PROPITIOUS TIME TO RAISE THIS POINT.

MR. HUGHES. YES, I WOULD THINK SO. YOU KNOW, I THINK MR. CYGANOWSKI HAD A VERY TELLING POINT, WHEN HE SAID THAT, YOU KNOW, THE AMERICAN FISHERMEN HAVE TO LIVE BY CERTAIN RULES, BUT OUR FOREIGN FRIENDS, YOU KNOW, ARE OUT THERE JUST MAKING A KILL IN SOME AREAS, SUCH AS BLUEFIN TUNA.

AND I AM HOPEFUL THAT WE WILL DO JUST THAT, WHEN IT COMES TIME TO RENEGOTIATE OUR GIFA THAT WE AT THAT POINT USE WHATEVER LEVERAGE WE HAVE IN MAKING CERTAIN THAT WE DO GET SOME CONCESSIONS IN AREAS SUCH AS THE BLUEFIN TUNA.

END....

2. FISHATT REQUESTED TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE GOJ OFFICIALS
WITH TEXT OF ABOVE REMARKS, AND TO REPORT ANY REACTION
WHICH THEY MIGHT HAVE. CHRISTOPHER

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